

Serial No. 10/801,842
Response dated January 9, 2005
Reply to Office Action of December 9, 2005

Attorney Docket No. IS01508ESG

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 through 16 remain in this application. Claims 17 through 19 have been withdrawn from consideration without prejudice or disclaimer. In addition, the preambles of claims 1 through 10 have been amended to clarify the subject matter of these claims.

The above Office Action states that claims 1 through 19, as originally filed, are subject to election/restriction. In particular, the above Office Action suggests that the subject application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

Group 1 - Base

Species I: FIGs. 1, 2

Species II: FIGs. 8 through 14

Group 2 - Latch

Species III: FIGs. 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13

Species IV: FIGs. 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14

Species V: FIGs. 7

Applicants hereby provisionally elect Group 1 - Base, Species I: FIGs. 1, 2 covered by claims 1 through 16; and Group 2 - Latch, Species III: FIGs. 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13 covered by claims 1 through 19, with traverse.

GROUP 1 - BASE

Applicants hereby inform the Examiner that there is only one embodiment, thus only one species, of the base disclosed by the subject application. FIGs. 1 and 2 show the same Base as FIGs. 8 through 14, and all claims directed to this particular Base. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the distinct species assertion of the Base are respectfully requested.

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GROUP 2 - LATCH

The Detailed Description of the subject application describes two different embodiments of the Latch as follows:

First Latch	FIGs. 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13
Second Latch	FIGs. 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14

First, the Latch shown in FIG. 7 is the same one shown in FIGs. 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14. Thus, Species V is not separate or distinct from Species IV. It should be noted that the stabilizer of FIG. 7 is representative of the stabilizer of both Latch embodiments.

Second, claims 10 through 16 specifically claim both Latch embodiments. In particular, claim 10 provides, *inter alia*, first and second detachable latches. Claims 11 through 16 depend from independent claim 10 and, thus, include the claim language of first and second detachable latches of claim 10. Accordingly, claims 10 through 16 provide for two latches and do not cover patentably distinct species of a single latch.

Third, claims 1 through 9 and 17 through 19 are generic claims covering both embodiments of the Latch. None of these claims include any language directed to only one type of Latch (and not the other type of Latch).

In view of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the distinct species assertion of the Latch are respectfully requested.

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CONCLUSION


No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein. Also, no amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claim, unless Applicants have argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to deduct any additional fees arising as a result of this response, including any fees for Extensions of Time, or any other communication from or to credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2117.

It is submitted that the claims clearly define the invention, are supported by the specification and drawings, and are in a condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Should the Examiner have any questions or concerns that may expedite prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
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01/09/06
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